REMARKS

In the present amendment, claim 1 has been amended and claims 2 and 4 have been cancelled. Accordingly, claims 1 and 3 are pending in the application with claim 1 being an independent claim.

Applicants note that claim 1 has been amended to even more clearly recite the presently claimed invention and to better comply with idiomatic English and standard U.S. practice. Furthermore, claim 1 has been amended to recite the technical feature that the average pore diameter of the porous body is controlled by determining a relationship between the freezing-environment temperature and the solidification time as well as a relationship between average poor diameter and solidification time. Support for the amendment can be found throughout the originally filed specification, e.g., Figures 4 and 8, Tables 1 and 3, and paragraphs [0058]-[0060], and [0074]. No new matter has been added.

Response to claim objection

Applicants respectfully submit that in view of the amendments to claim 1 the foregoing claim objection is moot.

Response to rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Office Action rejects claims 1-4 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Chang (Journal of Materials Science Letters, 2001, Vol.20, pp. 1199-1201), hereinafter "CHANG," in view of Lee at al. (Yonsei Medical Journal, 2001, Vol. 42, No. 2, pp. 172-179), hereinafter "LEE." The Office Action asserts that CHANG teaches all of the

elements of the presently claimed invention except "using temperature in freezing step to control pore diameter" (see Office Action, page 3, line 13). The Action further contends that LEE teaches the deficiency of CHANG by disclosing investigations on crosslinked collagen membranes, wherein it was recognized that the size and morphology of the pores are dependent upon the freezing temperature of the mixture before lyophilization, and "optimal pore size was obtained at freezing temperature of 70℃" (see Office Action, page 3, lines 17-18).

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. Applicants submit that in an attempt to advance prosecution and without expressing agreement with or acquiescence to the rejection, claim 1 has been amended to render the rejection moot.

Applicants note that both CHANG and LEE fail to disclose at least the feature of the presently claimed invention of "determining the solidification time for producing said porous body with respect to a desired average pore diameter of said porous body from a relation between the solidification time and the average pore diameter, and determining the freezing-environment temperature for producing said porous body from a relation between the freezing-environment temperature and the solidification time." As disclosed in the present specification, paragraphs [0058] to [0060], and demonstrated in Figure 3, the average pore diameter D_{AV} of the porous body is controlled by both the solidification time and the freezing-environment temperature. Figure 3 shows two graphs demonstrating the relationship between a) the average pore diameter D_{AV} and the solidification time Sb; and b) the solidification time Sb and the freezing-environment temperature T_0. Knowing these dependencies, a product having a desired pore diameter can be easily obtained, based on the teaching of the present specification.

Accordingly, since the combination of CHANG and LEE does not teach or suggest the presently claimed invention, withdrawal of the obviousness rejection is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is believed that all the claims in this application are in condition for allowance, which action is respectfully requested. If any issues yet remain which can be resolved by a telephone conference, the Examiner is respectfully invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number below.

Respectfully Submitted,
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